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**From:** HJR153  
**Sent:** Friday, September 10, 2004 12:59 PM  
**Subject:** HJR153 - Tom Korn's

To: hjr153@scc.state.va.us

Name: Tom Korn's

Street: 2032 N. Stafford St.

City, State, Zip: Arlington, VA 22207

Phone Number: 703-243-1231

Email: tomkorns@comcast.net

Utility Type: all

Company Name: Vepco. Verizon, Comcast

Comments: I am very much in favor of undergrounding utilities. In the early 1980's I had power and phone lines undergrounded from the street power pole to my house under a Vepco subsidy program available when upgrading my power requirements. I put in an extra conduit at that time for future services and subsequently used it for cable service. My motivation was largely aesthetic, but the absence of the low hanging lines over my driveway has been very beneficial through several renovations involving large trucks, dumpsters and other equipment that would have contacted the lines. I strongly endorse this kind of home subsidy for house service. In addition I have witnessed several transformer explosions in the neighborhood over the past 25 years that bear witness to the vulnerability of the network. In general the downtime has been minimal and in my early years here(1979-84) when I heated largely with locally felled firewood of little consequences. I grew up in the country where self reliance was a necessity. A recent several day outage impressed on me my current reliance on continuous power for heating as well as cooling and increased electronic communication. The fact that some neighborhoods were without power for a week while an adjacent street may have been unaffected pointed out the need for a more secure system of distribution. The level of citizen concern while short of panic was a new experience as the county supplied ice at central locations. I'm sure I wasn't alone in pondering the consequences of a protracted outage in bad weather or security event. I think we all got a taste of being inside the "bullseye" that week.

As a citizen planner I have had the good fortune to see a 1980's plan for undergrounding Lee Highway utilities in Cherrydale implemented over the past few years. The day the power lines were removed was like day the noise stopped in terms of calming the urban landscape. If planting trees is the most positive action that can be taken in an urban landscape, undergrounding is second and generally required in order to plant shade trees that won't interfere with utility lines. Arlington's linear city, transit based development has greatly benefitted from undergrounding requirements in both aesthetic and functional terms. Good urban design calls for a "thousand points of interest" not an overlay of obscuring urban clutter. Visible utility lines are the most prominent clutter and point of functional vulnerability for dense and power dependent multi story neighborhoods.